

Message Text

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11
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 IO-11

DHA-02 ORM-02 OMB-01 /073 W
----- 056629

R 201500Z JAN 76
FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9837
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

SQMJA/AMEMBASSY JIDDA 1261
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEL AVIV 0522

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, IS,LE, SY
SUBJECT: ISRAEL JITTERY BUT CAUTIOUS OVER DEVELOPMENTS IN LEBANON

REF TEL AVIV 501

1. ISRAELI PRESS JAN. 20 CITES DEFMIN PERES AS SAYING
DURING ISRAELI ARMY INTERVIEW PREVIOUS DAY THAT ISRAEL
WOULD HAVE TO TAKE "DEFENSIVE MEASURES" IF THE
SYRIAN ARMY INTERVENES IN LEBANON AND CREATES A STATE OF
WAR. PERES REPORTEDLY ADDED, "AS TO OTHER EVENTUALITIES,
SUCH AS PARTITION OR CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGE, THESE ARE
INTERNAL CHANGES; I'M DOUBTFUL IF IT WOULD (THEN) BE A
GOOD IDEA TO INTERVENE, AND I BELIEVE WE WOULD NOT
INTERVENE."

2. AS REFLECTED REFTTEL, ISRAELI PRESS JAN. 20 DEVOTES
MUCH MORE THAN USUAL SPACE TO EVENTS IN LEBANON, WITH
PRIMARY FOCUS ON IMPLICATIONS OF INTRODUCTION OF PLA
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UNITS FROM SYRIA. COMMENTARIES RANE FROM CALL FOR

ISRAELI CAUTION (GUINEY IN YEDIOT) TP SPECULATION THAT RABIN MAY POSTPONE HIS VISIT TO WASHINGTON SHOULD LEBANESE SITUATION DETERIORATE FURTHER (ZIMUKY AND KIWITI ALSO IN YEDIOT).

3. DATT IS REPORTING SEPARATELY RESULTS OF JAN 20 IDF BRIEFING ON PLA INTERVENTION.

4. COMMENT: ISRAELI PRESS ACCURATELY REFLECTS ATTITUDE OF PUBLIC TOWARD DEVELOPMENTS OF PAST FEW DAYS IN LEBANON--NERVOUS CONCERN QUALIFIED BY CAUTION FROM REAYUZATION THAT IN CURRENT LEBANESE CONFUSION PRESS ACCOUNTS SHOULD NOT BE GIVEN TOO MUCH WEIGHT. IN THIS CONNECTION WE WOULD CALL ATTENTION TO AP STORY REPORTING OFFICIAL ISRAELI SKEPTICISM AT STATEMENT JAN 19 BY CHAMOUN THAT SYRIAN TROOPS HAD ENTERED LEBANON. THIS MAY WELL BE SIGN THAT ISRAELI GOVERNMENT IS TRYING TO KEEP PUBLIC PRESSURE FOR ISRAELI INTERVENTION TO A MINIMUM. DUNNIGAN

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